

February 23, 2017

My name is Karen Healy.

I had been hospitalized for almost 24 years of my life. I have now been out of Connecticut Valley Hospital for two years and two months.

People from the legislature should not cut back on the budget because people already aren't even getting the care they need. Hospital units are already under-staffed, and I know that from personal experience.

I was at Cedarcrest in 2006. While I was there, I saw someone across the hall from me commit suicide even though they were supposedly on 1-to-1 constant observation. Staff could not give patients the attention they needed in order to stay safe or even get better.

When I was getting discharged from CVH, there were money and staffing problems that delayed me from getting out. Hospital staff were worried that there wasn't enough money to get me the staffing that would keep me safe. Some hospital staff were telling me I wasn't going to make it in the community and I would be back. On the Thursday I was supposed to be discharged, staff were telling me I would be back by the next Monday.

But I have been successful in the community for over 2 years now, thanks to CLRP and DMHAS helping me get the funding and the staff to keep me in my own apartment instead of costing the state more by keeping me at CVH.

I now have more time with my family. I have a job. I volunteer. That's why people in the legislature need to think about the impact their choices will have on real people like me.